or like a silver thread in the distance. He resorts to it more often than to his fellowmen. He does not pray to it, as his ancestors did, but he constantly visits it. The Nile is in his blood. There is the same intimate bond between the Nile and the fellaheen as between the sea and the fishermen of Brittany. They even call it *el Bahr*, the sea, and their fields they call "shores" (*el rif* — plural *el ariaf* — the usual word for the Egyptian countryside) ("a). At High Nile they believe women to be more fertile and men more healthy; marriages are most often celebrated at this season. If a child is sickly or ill, his mother takes him on the Nile at this time, and makes him throw sweets and dates into the clayey waters, with the words "Oh Nile, let my strength grow like your depth". A dying fellah, before he breathes his last, is given a final draught of its living water.

In the Coptic Mass there is the following prayer: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless this year the water of the river. By Thy grace bring it to due height. Gladden the face of the land, that the fields may have water and the crops be multiplied."

The silt of the Nile has its part also in the rites of life and death. The fellâha, when her time is coming, crawls to the brink of the water and takes up a handful of moist earth, which she will swallow at the time of delivery to ensure a successful birth.

When the *mizayen* cuts the child's hair for the first time, the hair ceremoniously cut off is not flung to the winds, but carefully rolled into a ball of earth.

Professional mourners bedaub their breasts, heads, and arms with mud as a sign of grief. The body is put into the earth without either coffin or clothes.

The fellaheen bury in the earth the jar containing their savings, and charms which they wish to take effect. Every birth affects the soil; the after-brith is buried inside the house, and the umbilical cord, wrapped up in a little bag with a few grains of corn, is dug into the father's field.

The fruits of the earth are still more closely involved in this peasant mysticism. The analogies between vegetable life and the peasants' own extremely physical existence make them believe in an interplay of fertility between the two.

The ceremonies of the seventh day, when the newly-born child is washed and given a name, often include the following

F 823 F [842 827] F [755] F [763] C 782 823 F 843 844 26 F 852 F 764 F 454 789 844 F 842 812 F 553 852

ness ; but these defects are due to his servitude and isolation. In the words of El-Kolâly, his mind is walled-in between ignorance and tyranny. (**)

Moreover the soil and the care of the soil make the fellah patient, long-suffering and hard. The soil has imprinted on him something of its own earthiness. His very love is entirely physical, and yet he is not immoral.

He is taught from childhood that he comes from his mother's womb. His bad language when he is angry shows how much he knows of sexual matters. Even girls playing with dolls enact scenes of perfect realism. But this calm animal shamelessness has nothing in common with obscenity. Fundamental morality is not affected by it. The fact that everybody is watching everybody else, together with the conservative temperament and instinctive modesty of the fellaheen, makes offences against morals fewer than elsewhere. As El-Kolâly says, 'Among the fellaheen offences against morality represent only a small proportion of the total'.

Poverty and tradition inure the fellah from his early days to the lack of all bodily ease. A comfortable bed, a pleasant home life, a good table, light company — these are things beyond his grasp. Their absence safeguards his morality. So do the precepts of Islam, it might be added ; but the fellaheen are very ignorant of their religion, and the Sheikhs and Ulema do little to teach them. It is more probable that among these primitive people natural morality keeps its original force.

The fellaheen are moral because they believe in God. They are material, but not materialistic. They believe wholeheartedly in the intervention and providence of God. It is always "*In sha Allah*" — if it is God's will. They make no plan, undertake nothing without adding "*In sha Allah*".

A Greek merchant says to a fellah, "You'll bring me your cotton, then, tomorrow ?"

"Yes, *ya khawâga*, (**) *in sha Allah*."

"Five cantars, not less. You understand ?"

"Yes, *in sha Allah*."

"You'll be able to find the camels for them ?"

"*In sha Allah*."

"I must have the goods before midday."

183
771 "*In sha Allah*".
812 "In sha Allah's no good. We're talking business, and
737 I want a definite promise".

"No *in sha Allah*, no cotton, *ya khawâga*. Good day".

771 'God will provide. God distributes His benefits. God
776 protects the crops. God is with the patient. To everyone
181 the fate which God has assigned him. We are from God, and to God we shall return. God is there. God will give in His own good time. Man proposes and God disposes. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.' Such are the sentences of peasant theology. They encourage fatalism and deepen resignation, but they are often rich with all the splendour of filial obedience to the Divine Will.

776 The fellah believes in God as the Prime Mover and First
2 of all Living. In spite of the poverty of his intellect, and his ignorance in matters of religion, his conception of God is admirably pure. God is the Almighty, the Just, the Good. All attributes are united in the word the peasant uses for God, *Rabbina*, our Lord and Master. To hear a fellah utter this word is to be convinced of his faith.

771 The superstitions which enmesh his soul have not cor-
782 rupted the essence of his faith. The fellaheen are far more
785 given to prayer and asceticism than other people, for they are by nature believers. They have always been powerfully attracted by sacredness (*baraka*), the supernatural, holiness, or even the appearance of these things.

779 The Catholics among the fellaheen, whom the writer
793 knows best, can be splendidly religious in their lives, even to
771 the point of heroism. Those of their priests who are fellaheen live among them and for them with a devotion and self-denial of which missionaries from Europe would rarely be capable. It must not be forgotten that the first monks of the Christian world, the monks of the Thebaid, were fellaheen (").

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

60.

Dogs of Arabs.

Everywhere on the margin of the Nile valley, are to be found Arab families, who, with their low, brown tents and a little live stock, shift north or south according to the season of the year. Their bristly, barking dogs are not particularly friendly animals. Moreover, perhaps even the Arabs themselves are here designated by the term, "dogs".

Ma ʾultê-lak, ya ʿAli?:
Baddar bina, baddar!
aḥsan kilāb el-ʿarab fuṭ-ṭurʾ bithabbar.
Win habbarūk, ya ʿAli,
maktūb u-mʾaddar.

Did I not tell thee so, ʿAli?
"Let us make an early start, an early start!
Else the Arabs' dogs will attack thee on the streets.
But if they should fall upon thee, ʿAli,
Then it is thus written and decreed."

2–5 contain a former warning, which is again given ʿAli. He laughed at it and they did not start until later. Then he actually suffered harm at the hands of the Arabs.

5 In the book of fate, according to the fatalistic doctrine held by the Moslems.